

December 6, 2005
Milton, Florida

The Marine Advisory Committee met on the above date with the following members present: Chairman Ken Johnson, Vice Chairman Pasco Gibson, and members Dan Wakley and Jeff Marker. Robert Turpin joined the meeting at 5:30 p.m. Also present were the County Administrator (Hunter Walker), Public Works Director (Avis Whitfield), and Marine Extension Agent (Christina Verlinde). Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

Marker moved approval of the minutes from the October 4, 2005 meeting; Wakley seconded, and the vote carried unanimously (4-0).

Boat Ramp/Dock Repair Status

Whitfield said the major repairs remaining at the boat ramps are pier repairs, and one contractor was awarded all the bids on pier repairs. He said Deep & Wide Dredging is presently working at the Bal Alex boat ramp, and they anticipate beginning work on Oriole Beach pier in about one week. Whitfield said after the pier is rebuilt at Oriole Beach the contractor will move to Woodlawn Beach boat ramp. Whitfield said the most used ramps are being repaired first.

Archie Glover Boat Ramp Paving

Walker distributed a memo regarding paving of the roadway going to Archie Glover Boat Ramp (Attachment in File). Whitfield said the estimate is for the roadway going to Archie Glover Boat Ramp but not for the parking area. He said the parking area was left off due to environmental and stormwater issues. Whitfield said the estimate to repave the road with a lime rock base and asphalt pavement is \$170,800.00. He said Tidewater/Skanska (I-10 bridge contractor) has agreed to fund half of the paving project with a contribution of \$85,400.00. Whitfield said this is extremely good news. He said Commissioner Stewart is agreeable to funding \$29,045.00 for the east/west segment of the roadway from District 1 Road funds. Whitfield recommended the remaining amount of \$56,355.00 be paid from the Boating Improvement fund. He said getting the roadway paved with another party paying half is a bargain.

There was discussion regarding the funds to be expensed from the District I Road funds and the Boating Improvement funds. Wakley agreed that this is a great opportunity to get the road paved. He asked the balance in the Boating Improvement fund. Walker said the Boating Improvement fund consists of approximately \$340,000.00. Wakley asked where the additional funds will come from if the project goes over budget. Whitfield said this price is with the Road and Bridge Department doing the work. He said the county has an annual asphalt contractor which stabilizes the price.

Wakley asked who will be responsible for repairs if the road gets washed out next year. Walker said the county will maintain the roadway after it is repaved. Whitfield said if the roadway is washed out by a hurricane, FEMA will reimburse the county for repairs.

Marker moved for a contribution from the Boating Improvement funds in the amount of \$56,355.00 to go towards paving of the roadway going to Archie Glover Boat ramp as recommended by Whitfield; Wakley seconded, and the vote carried unanimously (4-0).

Walker said he will present this Marine Advisory Committee recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners at the December Commission meeting. Whitfield said an agreement will be drawn up with Tidewater/Skanska, so the county will be assured of collecting those dollars.

Oyster Restoration Project

Walker said a storage location for the stockpile of fossil shell is needed for the Oyster Restoration project. He said the Bagdad Mill site is a perfect location. Walker said this site is 18 acres with deep barge access. He said there has been some opposition regarding this site from the Bagdad Historical Society.

Verlinde said a ½ to 1 acre site is needed to store the shell. There was discussion regarding several possible storage sites and whether the shell will be brought in and removed by truck or barge. Gibson said he would like the shell to be deployed in an area more beneficial to oyster production than the last site. Verlinde said she has the coordinates of the last site where shell was deployed. She said the next site will be 8,000 cubic yards of material. Johnson requested Gibson work with staff as the committee representative regarding the storage location and deployment site of the shell material.

Marker said an event with the school system and the Sheriff's Department is trying to be coordinated. He said his recommendation will be for Gibson to get the GPS coordinates of the other sites so Gibson can determine if those sites are beneficial. Marker said Gibson can provide the committee with this information at the next meeting. He said the school system can be coordinated into the project when a timeline for deployment is set. There was further discussion regarding a suitable site to stockpile shell, and Walker said he felt the issues regarding the Bagdad Mill site can be resolved.

Jeff Marker Items

Marker asked if Joel Haniford (Budget Director) can provide the Boating Improvement fund balance. Walker said the balance is \$339,234.00 and the budgeted amount for 2006 is \$66,500.00. He said he will check with Haniford to confirm the amounts.

Marker said there has been public discussion regarding Quintette Road and the boat ramp closure. He said Commissioner Stewart has committed to looking at improving the Quintette boat ramps once the bridge project is completed. Whitfield said Quintette Road has two ramps. He said the county has a problem with one of the ramps staying sanded up. Whitfield said a lot of sand comes down the river, and outside of building a jetty, he does not know how to keep the sand from washing into the ramp. He said repairs are planned on the ramp that works. Whitfield said there will be one good ramp when the road reopens around the end of January. He said the Quintette Road repairs absolutely needed to be done, and explained the reasons for proceeding with the project at this time.

Walker discussed the closure of the access road to Keyser and Webb Landings and a possible agreement with International Paper allowing the Water Management District to obtain roadway jurisdiction. He said International Paper has the land up for sale, and access to the boat ramps could possibly be a long term problem.

Marker said the committee needs direction in developing a public waterway access plan to address needs 10 or 20 years into the future. He said according to the Board of County Commissioners, it is the Marine Advisory Committee's responsibility to present ideas to the Commission. Marker said projects need to be identified. He said locating funds to purchase property and a

multi use water park are future projects previously discussed. Marker suggested IP (International Paper) property be looked at for the boating public. Whitfield said it is his understanding IP land will be sold off in very large tracks. He said the best opportunity will be to negotiate with the new property owner. Johnson suggested purchasing a large track of property to create a camping area with a water park. Wakley asked if the County Attorney can acquire the deeded access to the boat ramps for a nominal fee. Walker said the County Attorney has made a proposal to secure a right of way. Turpin said he spoke to a representative from IP a few weeks ago, and the spokesperson said IP is hoping to sell the property to one owner and retain the timber rights. He said IP is not interested in selling rights of way. There was continued discussion regarding IP property. Turpin suggested locating other waterfront parcels and approach those individual owners to see if they may be interested in selling.

Walker said other counties in Florida have used a referendum to set aside a portion of the ad valorem tax to purchase waterfront property. He said this can be of real value to the citizens of Santa Rosa County. Wakley suggested raising boater registration fees as a source of revenue. Walker suggested the committee develop a 10 year plan for waterway preservation. There was further discussion regarding possible funding sources. Turpin said this committee can recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that funding be spread over several different revenue sources, and he named several possible funding sources.

Turpin moved for the Marine Advisory Committee to begin a 20 year strategic plan for public waterway access in Santa Rosa County; Marker seconded, and the vote carried unanimously (5-0).

Turpin said the plan can include a property site, funding sources, and the facility design. Wakley said launch fees can be another source of funding. Marker said another public input workshop can be scheduled in February or March. Turpin said public input can be requested when the meeting is advertised. Johnson suggested another survey. Turpin requested Verlinde contact the local technical schools regarding the possibility of a water park design being drafted as an educational project.

Wakley discussed the sediment build up where East River goes into the bay. He said the sediment build up is storm related and asked if the area can be dredged. Whitfield said he is unaware of any federal funding available, and East River is state water. Wakley requested county staff contact the state regarding the sediment build up. Whitfield said he will email his water management contact that is removing debris from state waters.

Wakley asked where the fishermen on the Navarre causeway will park when the bike pathway is completed. Walker said Blaylock will have this information. He said the county is negotiating with the state regarding the county taking over the Navarre Beach Park and the fishing pier. Gibson said this will be a perfect area for the county to have a nice south end park.

Johnson said the Marine Sanctuary should be inshore so it will be accessible without a boat. Turpin said the Division of Parks and Recreation at DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) insisted the Marine Sanctuary be offshore. He said the Division of Parks and Recreation will no longer be a part of planning if the county takes over the park.

Gibson asked the status of the Navarre Beach fishing pier. He said the Panama City pier is owned by the county, and it is set up to cater to county residents. Walker said the pier should be moved to the east away from swimmers and the public beach area. He said funding issues to build a new state of the art pier are under discussion with FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). Walker said the new pier design will be similar to the piers at Pensacola Beach and Okaloosa County.

Turpin discussed the lease agreement regarding the southern portion of the Pensacola Bay Fishing Bridge that attaches to the Gulf Breeze peninsula. He asked what the plan is regarding demolition or rebuilding of this bridge. Whitfield said he felt the City of Gulf Breeze is planning to make some repairs with FEMA funding. Johnson requested county staff contact Buzz Eddy, Gulf Breeze City Manager, regarding the fishing bridge repairs. Turpin said this fishing bridge is heavily used. Turpin requested the committee look at the fishing opportunities lost to the public in Gulf Breeze during strategic planning. He said possibly the chairman can meet with the City of Gulf Breeze to offer assistance. Whitfield said he thought the damage to the fishing bridge was due to Hurricane Ivan. He said with FEMA funding 90% and the state funding 5% it will only cost the City of Gulf Breeze 5% to repair the damaged bridge. Walker said he will contact Buzz Eddy regarding the status of the fishing bridge.

There being no further business to come before the Marine Advisory Board at this time, the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.